

## Compass opens new exhibit: 'Susan Bull Riley: Natural Affection'

Susan Bull Riley's primary muse is Vermont's natural world, which was hers to explore as she grew up in a family that spent as much time outdoors as in. Riley's new exhibit at the Compass Music and Arts Center – "Natural Affection" – opens on August 25, with a reception from 5:00-7:00 pm. It reflects three facets of her work: a love of botanical watercolor, a bottomless affection for birds, and a need to release, via art, the intensity of her affection for the landscapes of her native state. This is Riley's second time exhibiting at the Compass Center.

Patrons and admirers are captivated by the beauty and precision she brings to her work, responding strongly to the affection she has for the natural world and how it speaks to the soul.

"A thread in all my paintings is close observation of my subjects," she says. She reveals just enough detail to focus the eye and illustrate the exquisite play of light in the natural world, be it on petals or feathers, or in a larger landscape.

Riley's ability to give creatures life in an elegant and stunning way are reflected in her oil painting of hummingbirds feeding in a spray of Solomon's Seal; her watercolor technique depicting a summer afternoon in Waitsfield; and a bluebird perched on the praying hands of a graveyard Madonna.

Although she was formally trained in music rather than art, Riley's paintings have received honors in regional, national and international galleries and institutions. They have been sought by organizations such as The New York State Museum, The National Science Foundation, the Vermont Community Foundation, the American Chestnut Foundation, the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, and from many local land trusts. Her work can be found in public and private collections in this country and beyond.

The exhibit runs through October 28.

This exhibit is a part of Vermont Arts 2017, celebrating public funding for the arts.

The Compass Music and Arts Center is located in Park Village at 333 Jones Drive, Brandon VT, 05733 (Park Village used to be the Brandon Training School, located 1.5 miles north of downtown Brandon off Arnold District Rd.). [www.cmacvt.org](http://www.cmacvt.org)